



MISSOULA COUNTY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Forward Thinking, High Achieving.



MISSOULA COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Annual Report 2010 – 2011

A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

MCPS TRUSTEES

Missoula County Public Schools, a unified district, is governed by an 11-member Board of Trustees. Trustees are elected to serve without compensation for overlapping terms of three years each and convene the second Tuesday of every month to address district business.

TONI REHBEIN

Elementary Trustee and Board Chair

SCOTT BIXLER

Elementary Trustee

LARRY FOUST

Elementary Trustee

DEBBIE DUPREE

High School Trustee; representing Seeley Lake, Swan Valley, Clinton, Potomac & Sunset elementary districts

MARCIA HOLLAND

High School Trustee; representing the Hellgate Elementary district

JOSEPH KNAPP

Elementary Trustee

DRAKE LEMM

High School Trustee; representing the Lolo, Woodman, DeSmet elementary districts

JAMES SADLER

High School Trustee; representing the Target Range and Bonner elementary districts

MICHAEL SMITH

Elementary Trustee

JOE TOTH

Elementary Trustee

SHELLY WILLS

Elementary Trustee

Together, we can achieve!

This publication provides us with an opportunity to share information about current Missoula County Public Schools' initiatives and exciting developments in our future.

As we launch the 2011-2012 school year and look back on past achievements, I am reminded that the past three years have exemplified change and accomplishment at MCPS. From establishing high school graduation as a priority through our nationally recognized "Graduation Matters Missoula" initiative to raising test scores in our classrooms, we have been on the march to be the best. We will always pursue excellence in our schools. Our educational priority and mission is simple: all students succeed academically and graduate, regardless of their circumstances or abilities.

As you read about the MCPS 21st Century Model of Change, you will notice that "collaboration" is a key element in its implementation. MCPS is committed to collaboration with all stakeholders. Together, we can continue to improve the graduation rate, reduce the dropout rate, and increase academic rigor and overall student success. Together, we can truly move MCPS to a new American standard of public education.

The 21st Century Model of Change will provide the framework to ensure our students attain the core knowledge and skills they need to be successful on the global stage. Beginning with the class of 2014, MCPS will be one of only a few Montana districts requiring 24 credits to earn a high school diploma. Our intent is to make each and every credit a meaningful and relevant educational experience. By providing students with challenging and engaging pathways such as the International Baccalaureate (IB) Programme, Health Sciences Academy, Montana Digital Academy, dual-credit courses and world languages, students will have options that fit their career interests and prepare them for post-secondary education.

Please continue your outstanding support of our students, our school system and the community. I look forward to our on-going collaboration to ensure student success for all.

Sincerely,



Alex P. Apostle

ALEX P. APOSTLE, Ph.D.
Superintendent, Missoula County Public Schools

“ *Our educational priority and mission is simple: all students succeed academically and graduate, regardless of their circumstances or abilities.* ”



CONTENTS

21st Century Initiative	2
Graduation Matters Missoula	3
New Directions	4
Parent & Community Involvement	5
Student Achievement	6 – 7
Enrollment Snapshots	8
Budget	9

MISSION: Missoula County Public Schools’ mission is to ensure that each student achieves his/her full and unique potential.

GOALS: MCPS has five measurable goals that guide the development and implementation of programs, resources and budget. The district will collaborate with all stakeholders to ensure continuous progress toward these goals:

- **Achievement and graduation for all students, regardless of their circumstances or abilities.**
- **Refine and implement a quality evaluation and supervision program for all staff.**
- **Define and implement a quality professional development program that encompasses best practices and supports the needs of all staff.**
- **Restructure the organization to become more efficient, effective and accountable to support the goals of the district.**
- **Cultivate and enhance staff, student, parent, business and community involvement.**

STRATEGIC PLAN 2007-2012:

The Board of Trustees represents all citizens of the district in its stewardship of Missoula County Public Schools. To this end, the strategic plan is based on this vision.

Learning environment – MCPS provides an educational environment where all students are challenged, respected, cared for and nurtured.

Human resources – MCPS recruits professional educators and support staff committed to the fulfillment of the district mission and vision.

Instruction – MCPS offers a variety of instructional programs that reflect “best practices” or proven “research-based practices” as facilitated by the Teaching and Learning Department.

Financial resources – MCPS, in partnership with local, state and federal funding sources, strives to fully implement the strategic plan.

Facilities – MCPS will provide a safe, well-maintained and up-to-date teaching and learning environment.

Community – MCPS supports and encourages public participation and involvement in its programs and program delivery.

AN EDUCATION TO MEET THE DEMANDS OF THE 21st CENTURY

Global, economic and technological advances are significantly impacting students' lives. It is critical that Missoula County Public Schools – through its 21st Century Initiative – transform classrooms and schools to provide students with the core knowledge and skills they need to be successful in their careers and citizenship in a global century.

In the 2010 – 2011 school year, MCPS collaborated with stakeholders to design a new model of education. Based on the integration of six essential “elements of change,” this new model will transform learning environments by providing students with opportunities to engage in the creative process, collaborate to problem solve, and communicate their decisions. Through new technologies and innovative programs, learning will happen anytime, anywhere – in authentic “real world” applications.

Implementation of the 21st Century Model of Change begins in fall 2011. Learn how you can be a part of this transformation by visiting www.mcpscentury21.org.

SIX ELEMENTS OF CHANGE IN THE 21st CENTURY MODEL

Increase Student Engagement

Connect student learning to the “real world” through authentic and innovative experiences.

Transform Learning Environments

Transform the concept of “school” to embrace dynamic, sustainable learning environments.

Support Innovators

Support innovators in employing practices that emphasize authentic learning experiences and increase student engagement.

Personalize Professional Growth

Cultivate and model a culture of dynamic professional learning that embraces continuous change.

Enhance Communications

Advance the use of communication tools that foster transparent conversation.

Collaborate to Make Decisions

Establish an expectation of collaboration to solve problems and make decisions.

The 21st Century Initiative is a United Way funded program. United Way of Missoula County is one of many donors that have contributed to the initiative.



GRADUATION MATTERS MISSOULA

Since its launch in January 2010, the MCPS Graduation Matters Missoula initiative has collaborated with educators, parents, businesses and community members to raise awareness regarding the importance of graduation. In 2010, MCPS reported an 84 percent graduation rate – that was higher than Montana’s graduation rate of 80 percent and above the national average of about 69 percent.

Why graduate? The average annual income for a high school dropout in 2005 was \$17,299, compared to \$26,933 for a high school graduate; that’s a difference of \$9,634 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2006). Graduation is an important tool in the recovery of Montana’s struggling economy.

GMM efforts in the past 18 months include:

- Creating special committees at each high school to work directly with students who face unique challenges and who are at risk for dropping out and/or not graduating on time.
- Establishing creative pathways, such as online classes, to help students recover high school credits.
- Designing procedures to more effectively utilize volunteers to increase student engagement.
- Completing a three-year strategic plan and organizing special committees to guide future projects and events.
- Continuing efforts to promote the importance of graduation – both in schools and in the community – including website, social media, informational brochures, posters, banners, TV PSAs and booths at various community events.



These efforts are paying off. In the 2008-2009 school year, MCPS schools reported 162 dropouts. One year later, schools reported only 88 dropouts – a reduction of 46 percent. The final number of dropouts reported for the 2010-2011 school year will not be available until late fall, but MCPS continues to work to reduce its dropout rate by implementing rigorous and relevant programs.

AVENTA ONLINE CREDIT-RECOVERY PROGRAM: NEW OPTIONS FOR STUDENTS

Graduation Matters Missoula is a component of the district’s 21st Century Model of Change. Recognizing that today’s students need a variety of pathways to graduation, the district launched an online credit-recovery program called Aventa in October 2010. Aventa provides high school students with the opportunity to retake courses for credit, thus remaining on track for graduation. The program is funded with a donation from St. Patrick Hospital (through United Way of Missoula County). In June, 42 seniors graduated on time with their classmates because they completed credit recovery through Aventa.



NEW DIRECTIONS TO SUPPORT 21st CENTURY LEARNING



International Baccalaureate Programme – Hellgate High School will launch this advanced academic program with the opening of the 2012-2013 school year, with plans to expand the program to other high schools in 2013-2014. All students can apply to the two-year International Baccalaureate program, which combines rigorous coursework, international studies and extensive community service. Students who successfully complete the program often enter with advanced credits in many colleges across the country. Ultimately, MCPS hopes to develop a K-12 IB program – a first in the state of Montana.

Health Sciences Academy – A Health Sciences Academy is in development at Big Sky High School. The first academy at MCPS will provide an opportunity for students to learn through a hands-on, project-based biomedical STEM curriculum (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) that allows students to create, design, build, problem solve and collaborate in math and science. Students are exposed to various career paths through internships and work experiences. Academy courses are in development; 100 freshmen will enter the academy in fall 2012. By the 2015-2016 school year, the academy should have a full enrollment of 400 students in grades 9 through 12. Career academies exemplify increasing student engagement and transforming learning environments – two elements in the MCPS 21st Century Model of Change.

Montana Digital Academy – In fall 2010, the Montana Digital Academy (MTDA) collaborated with public schools to enroll students in online classes. Funded by the Montana Legislature, MTDA offers a variety of core and/or specialized online (Web-based) classes that schools may not have the ability to offer onsite. These include dual-credit classes (classes that provide both high school and college credit), Advanced Placement classes, specialized classes such as Chinese, and core classes in all disciplines. MCPS students earned 128 credits through MTDA during the 2010 – 2011 school year. Online courses offer students an opportunity to experience mobile learning (anywhere, anytime), interact with individuals across the globe and master technologies that they may use in their careers.

Partnership Health Clinic at Lowell School – Partnership Health Center in Missoula received \$500,000 under the Affordable Care Act to partner with MCPS to construct the first *school-based health clinic* in the state at Lowell School. Lowell serves many low-income families; more than 80 percent of students at the school receive free and/or reduced price meals. The clinic will offer a variety of health services to Lowell students and their families. Partnership Health Center plans to involve MCPS and Lowell families in the design of the facility.

Collaborations with Missoula Public Library – Missoula Public Library collaborated with Big Sky High School to open a library branch at the school in December 2010 to serve south Missoula residents. The partnership extends the Big Sky library's hours into the evening, and offers both students and the general public a place to study, read or access a computer after the school day. Missoula Public Library has operated a branch library at Seeley-Swan High School in Seeley Lake for several years, but this is the library's first branch established within the city of Missoula.

COLLABORATING FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

There are hundreds of exciting cooperative efforts happening in MCPS schools that are designed to engage students in project-based learning and provide opportunities to apply their skills and knowledge to real-world issues. Every day, students, educators, parents, businesses and other individuals are partnering to create more learning opportunities for students. Below are just a few examples of current programs. Want to get involved? Learn how you can volunteer at www.mcps.k12.mt.us.



COACHING STUDENTS IN WRITING

The Writing Coaches of Missoula – a group of 66 community members who mentor high school and middle school students on their writing and critical thinking skills – conducted 1,351 writing conferences with students in 2010-2011, 40 percent more than the previous year. Working with teachers, the coaches assisted students at Hellgate, Big Sky, Sentinel, Meadow Hill and Washington schools. In fall 2011, writing coaches will initiate a pilot project in collaboration with UM students to provide 420 eighth grade students with one-on-one writing conferences. Learn more online at www.writingcoaches.wordpress.com.

KEEPING STUDENTS ENGAGED THROUGH FLAGSHIP

The Flagship Program provides free activities for MCPS students to enhance their academic, social, cultural and physical development so that they can succeed in school and become healthy and productive adults. In 2010-2011, Flagship provided activities after school and during the summer in the high schools, middle schools and select elementary schools. In partnership with principals and educators, Flagship coordinators work directly with students to implement activities that interest and engage youth. Last year, approximately 2,500 MCPS students participated in one or more Flagship activities. Learn more online at www.flagshipfoundation.org.

ONE BOOK, ONE COMMUNITY AT PORTER MIDDLE SCHOOL

C.S. Porter Middle School launches its “One Book, One Community” program each October. All Porter students read one carefully chosen book that explores a theme that is prevalent in their lives. Past choices include *Stand Tall*, *Hoot*, *Two Old Women*, *Misfits*, *Red Kayak*, *Peak*, *The Schwa Was Here* and *The Green Glass Sea*. While reading, students participate in engaging team-building exercises, art projects, book clubs and other activities. Parents and community members are invited to also read the book and get involved in events as guest speakers and volunteers. To conclude the schoolwide read, the entire school community comes together for a celebratory event!

Read more about our collaborative programs on the back cover ...

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

MONITORING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

MCPS students continue to score high on Montana's statewide assessments, tests that meet the requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind Act and determine if schools and districts make required "adequate yearly progress" (AYP).

In March 2011, 90 percent of MCPS elementary students scored proficient or advanced on the reading assessment, compared to 85 percent statewide.

Seventy-nine percent of MCPS elementary students scored proficient or advanced in math, compared to 69 percent statewide.

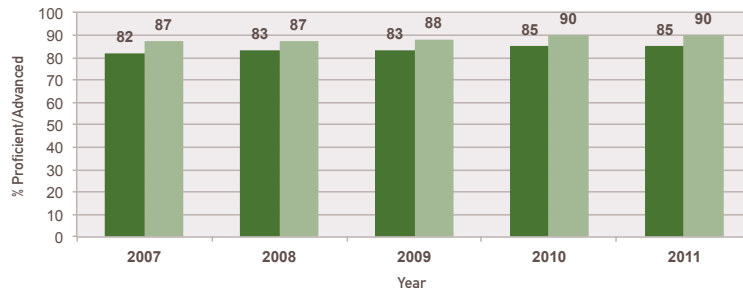
At the high school level, only grade 10 students are tested. Eighty-eight percent of MCPS 10th graders scored proficient or advanced in reading, compared to 83 percent statewide. Sixty-five percent of MCPS 10th graders scored proficient or advanced in math, compared to 59 percent statewide.

In recent years, the district has made significant gains in student test scores in math. The improved scores are attributed, in part, to a curriculum that incorporates "math talk" – a process that emphasizes developing math language and communication so that students understand concepts rather than follow a sequence of procedures. The curriculum is more hands-on, engaging and students feel connected to their learning – all elements of the 21st Century Model of Change.

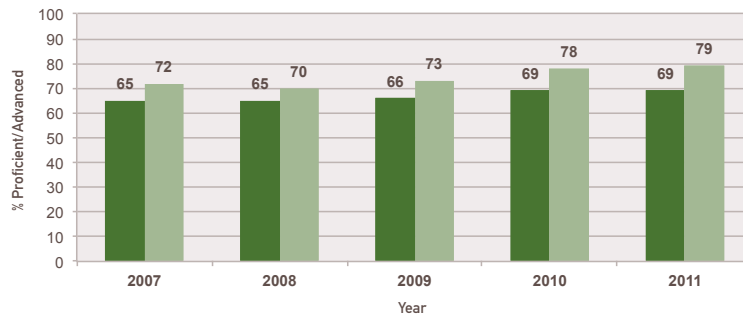
Montana's Office of Public Instruction provides extensive information regarding student assessment data, including AYP determinations for all schools, on its website at www.opi.mt.gov.

■ State ■ District

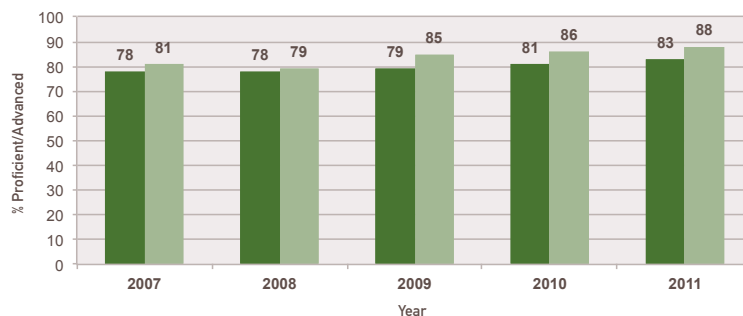
Percent of students in grades 3-8 scoring proficient or advanced on the Montana AYP Reading Assessment



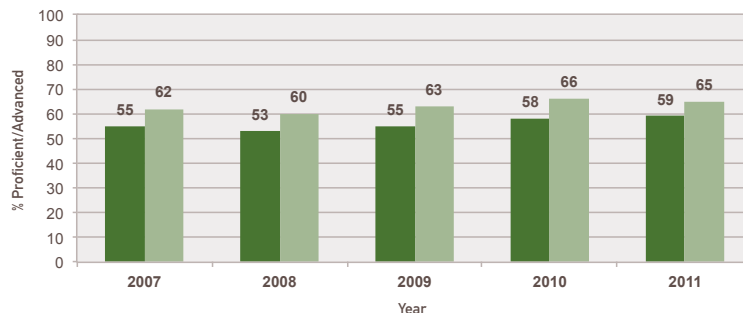
Percent of students in grades 3-8 scoring proficient or advanced on the Montana AYP Math Assessment



Percent of students in grade 10 scoring proficient or advanced on the Montana AYP Reading Assessment



Percent of students in grade 10 scoring proficient or advanced on the Montana AYP Math Assessment



STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

GRADUATES EARN SIGNIFICANT SCHOLARSHIPS

More than 200 graduates of Big Sky, Hellgate, Sentinel and Seeley-Swan high schools received scholarships and other cash awards totaling more than \$10,000,000 in the 2010-2011 academic year.

COLD SPRINGS AND RUSSELL SCHOOLS RECEIVE 'BLUE RIBBON' AWARD

Cold Springs School and Russell Elementary, which serve K-5 students, will both receive a 2011 National Blue Ribbon Schools Award. The national program honors schools across the country that have made significant progress in closing the achievement gap or whose students achieve at very high levels. To qualify, a school's students must be in the top 10 percent of all students tested in the state, or be a school with at least 40 percent of its students from disadvantaged backgrounds that improved its student performance to high levels. Both schools learned in December 2010 that they were two of three Montana schools nominated to receive the prestigious award this year. The schools will send representatives to attend a Washington, D.C., ceremony later this fall, where they will receive plaques and flags to commemorate this achievement. Congratulations to students, staff and parents at both facilities!

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS TESTS

MCPS students taking the ACT and SAT college admissions tests generally score higher, on average, compared to the state and national averages.

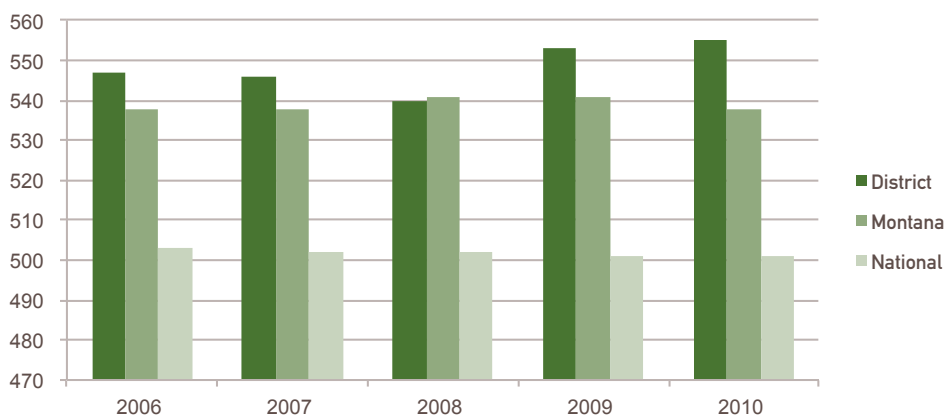
- 357 MCPS students completed the ACT in 2011.
- 285 MCPS students completed the SAT in 2010.

2007-2011 COMPARISON OF DISTRICT, STATE AND NATIONAL ACT COMPOSITE SCORES

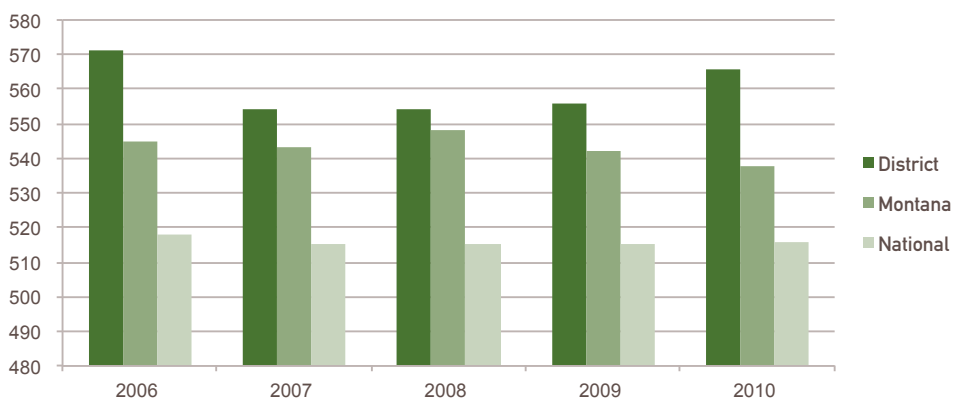
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
District	21.2	22.6	22.8	22.9	23.0
State	21.9	22.0	22.0	22.0	22.1
National	21.2	21.1	21.1	21.0	21.1

2006-2010 Comparison of district, state and national SAT mean scores:

VERBAL SCORES



MATH SCORES



SNAPSHOTS

ENROLLMENT

MCPS has experienced declining student enrollment in grades K-12 for several years. In 2001, MCPS served 3,456 elementary students (compares to 3,287 in 2011); 1,822 middle school students (compares to 1,507 in 2011); and 4,017 high school students (compares to 3,565 in 2011). These figures represent a 10 percent decrease in student enrollment since 2001.

FREE AND/OR REDUCED MEALS PROGRAM

A struggling economy and loss of jobs at the local, state and national levels is reflected in the growing number of students and families who receive meal benefits in the district. These numbers leveled off in 2010, but remain high compared to previous years.

TITLE I SERVICES

MCPS receives federal Title I funding to provide additional academic programs in schools with the highest percentages of students from low-income families. In the 2010 – 2011 school year, six MCPS schools offered schoolwide Title I services and five schools offered targeted-assistance services. All of these schools develop extensive plans for improving student achievement and enhancing parent involvement.

A SNAPSHOT OF MCPS SCHOOLS

The heart of any school district is the teaching and learning that happens every day in the classroom. Missoula County Public Schools proudly served approximately 8,350 students in grades kindergarten through 12 during the 2010 – 2011 school year.

The district operates nine elementaries (grades K-5), three middle schools (grades 6-8), four high schools (grades 9-12), Alternative High School Programs at Willard School and a preschool program at Jefferson Center.

ENROLLMENT: February 2011

	Enrollment	% Free / Reduced Meals	Title I Services
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS			
Chief Charlo	440	39.5%	Targeted Assisted
Cold Springs	475	20.4%	No
Franklin	267	80.9%	Schoolwide
Hawthorne	322	64.6%	Schoolwide
Lewis and Clark	466	45.1%	Schoolwide
Lowell	276	80.8%	Schoolwide
Paxson	338	43.8%	Targeted Assisted
Rattlesnake	393	35.9%	No
Russell	310	65.8%	Schoolwide

MIDDLE SCHOOLS

C.S. Porter	460	57.0%	Schoolwide
Meadow Hill	426	41.1%	No
Washington	621	33.2%	No

HIGH SCHOOLS*

Big Sky	1,033	37.9%	Targeted Assisted
Hellgate	1,239	35.9%	Targeted Assisted
Seeley-Swan	102	45.1%	Targeted Assisted
Sentinel	1,191	25.8%	No

*Willard students enrolled in other high schools.

Percent of MCPS students by school level who receive benefits through the federal free and/or reduced prices meal program in November

MCPS (by level)	2007	2008	2009	2010
Elementaries (grades K-5)	40%	43%	47%	46%
Middle Schools (grades 6-8)	30%	34%	40%	39%
High Schools (grades 9-12)	24%	27%	31%	30%

BUDGET

MCPS GENERAL FUND REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES

MCPS elementary (grades K-8) and high school (grades 9-12) districts have different student attendance boundaries and therefore separate tax bases. As a result, MCPS maintains separate budgets for its K-8 schools and its high schools.

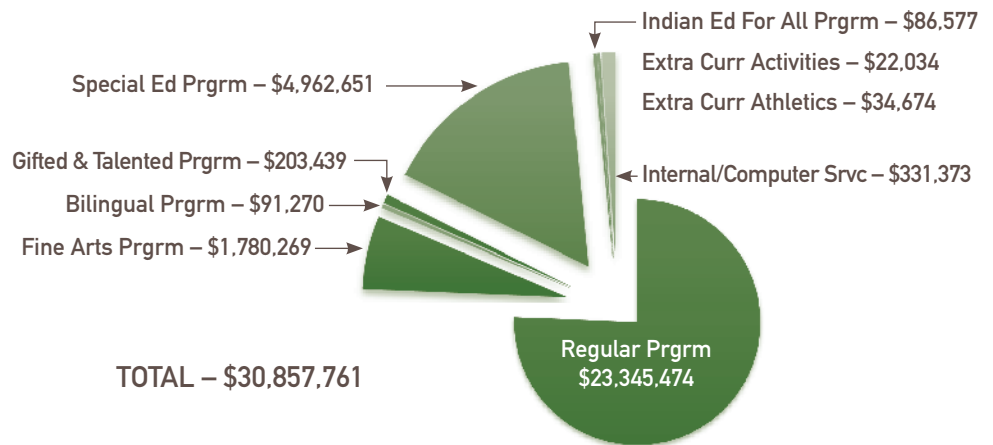
The general fund is the primary operating fund for a Montana school district. A district's general fund supports employee salaries and benefits, utilities, instruction and assessment programs, textbooks, supplies and equipment. It does not pay for transportation of students to and from school or for adult education programs.

In the 2010 – 2011 school year, MCPS received 47 percent of its funding from the state, 37 percent from local property taxes, 10 percent from county sources, 5 percent from the federal government and 1 percent from local nontax sources.

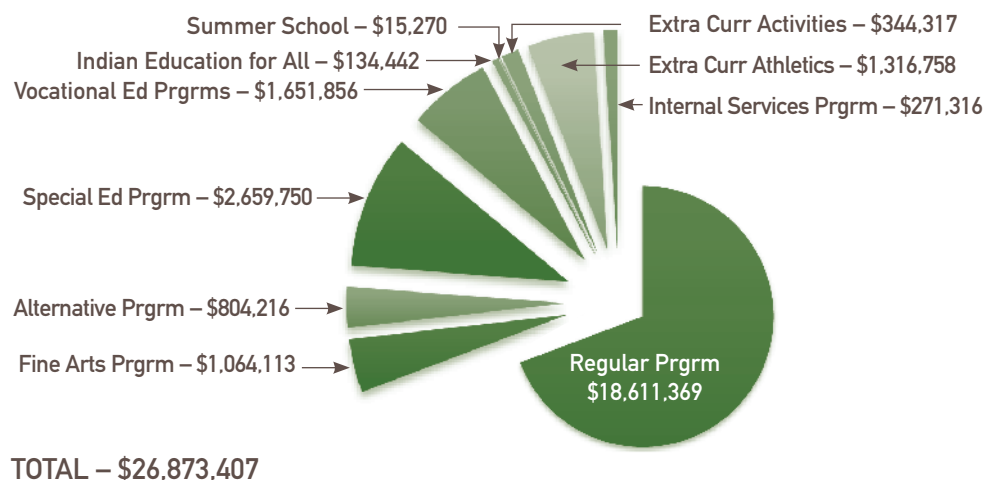
In 2010 – 2011, MCPS had an elementary general fund budget of \$30,857,761 and a high school general fund budget of \$26,873,407. General Fund expenditures were divided as shown in the charts to the right:



ELEMENTARY GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES – BY PROGRAM



HIGH SCHOOL GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES – BY PROGRAM



OPERATION AND BUILDING RESERVE LEVIES

In a generous show of support, in May 2011 voters in MCPS elementary and high school districts approved four levies.

- Elementary General Fund Operation Levy: \$435,000.
- Elementary Building Reserve: \$2,500,000 (\$500,000 per year for five years).
- High School General Fund Operation Levy: \$710,000.
- High School Building Reserve: \$3,150,000 (\$450,000 per year for seven years).

While operation levies provide revenue for the district's general fund, building reserve levies are the main source of funding for day-to-day maintenance, repair and equipping of schools, grounds and other facilities. Building reserve funds support both planned and emergency repairs in buildings.

Voters in MCPS elementary and high school districts have consistently approved MCPS operation levies for several years. The district appreciates the educators, staff, parents, businesses and community members who advocated for passage of these four levies.

COLLABORATING FOR STUDENT SUCCESS (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5)

ARABIC AND CHINESE LANGUAGE CLASSES

MCPS joined with The University of Montana to offer Arabic and Chinese language classes to high school students. Classes in Arabic, funded with a U.S. Department of Education five-year grant, began in fall 2010 at Hellgate and Sentinel high schools. Big Sky High School offers Arabic starting this fall. In addition, Mandarin Chinese language classes began in fall 2009 at all three Missoula high schools through the Confucius Institute at UM and the Montana Digital Academy. More than 160 MCPS students completed Arabic and Chinese courses during the 2010-2011 school year.



HANDS-ON LEARNING IN SCHOOL/ COMMUNITY GARDENS

Gardens are springing up at several MCPS schools. One of the oldest gardens is Meadow Hill Middle School's Community Garden and Classroom – a school/community collaboration affiliated with Garden City Harvest. In 2009, more than 500 Meadow Hill and Cold Springs students visited or worked in the garden, side-by-side with parents and neighbors. Garden City Harvest employs a part-time garden coordinator and educator at the site as a resource to community gardeners and the MCPS students who use the garden as an outdoor classroom. Gardens are also located at Lowell, Willard, Paxson and Franklin schools.

NEW PLAYGROUNDS AT LEWIS AND CLARK, FRANKLIN SCHOOLS

At Lewis and Clark and Franklin elementary schools, students, staff and parents worked together to fundraise, design and construct new playgrounds in 2010-2011. Both playgrounds feature new equipment and natural features that encourage more physical activity and cooperative play. Franklin's new playground was dedicated last spring and Lewis and Clark celebrated the opening of its new playground in September 2011.



Special thanks to Stefanie Kilts for the use of her photography.

♻️ Printed on recycled paper using eco-friendly inks

MISSOULA COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
215 S. 6th St. W. • Missoula, MT 59801

(406) 728-2400, Ext.1024



• www.mcps.k12.mt.us



Forward Thinking, High Achieving.